I claim:

1. An engine control unit for controlling operation of a vehicle engine provided with power supply means for receiving a power from an external power source and supplying a power required for the engine control unit,

the engine control unit comprising:

unit disconnection detecting means for detecting that the engine control unit is disconnected from the external power source and that the engine control unit is connected to the external power source, and

storage means for storing predetermined information,

wherein the engine control unit stores an engine stop flag in the storage means when disconnection of the engine control unit is detected by the unit disconnection detecting means and does not permit operation of the engine for a predetermined time period in the case where the engine stop flag is stored in the storage means when connection of the engine control unit is detected.

2. An engine control unit according to Claim 1 wherein the engine control

unit permits operation of the engine according to the result of collation between an ID code received from the outside and the ID code which is registered in advance.

3. An engine control unit according to Claim 1 wherein the engine control unit also stops operation of control systems which are not used for controlling the engine for a predetermined time period in the case where the engine stop flag is stored in the storage means when a power is supplied from the external power source.

4. An engine control unit according to Claim 1 wherein the unit disconnection detecting means observes an input voltage based on variations in the input voltage at the power supply means and, when the voltage has not reached a predetermined value for more than a certain period of time, determines that the engine control unit is disconnected.

5. An engine control unit according to Claim 3 wherein the control systems comprises a pump control system or a meter control system.